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**ANTI-SEMITISM IN EUROPE (1879-1914). LINES OF INQUIRY,
CONCEPTION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH SEMINAR
AT THE CENTER FOR ANTI-SEMITISM RESEARCH¹**

ULRICH WYRWA

Abstract

As current controversies about anti-Semitism in Europe show, anti-Jewish sentiments and views are not limited to single nations but represent a European-wide phenomenon. The paper presents a research seminar at the Center for Research on Anti-Semitism at the Technical University Berlin regarding the emergence and the development of anti-Semitism in Europe from 1879, when the term itself was first coined, up to the First World War, i.e. the formative phase of anti-Semitism as a social and political movement. This seminar consists of eleven individual research projects regarding different European countries and regions. The paper describes the leading questions of this research seminar, presents its main objectives and intentions, determines the underlying term of anti-Semitism, and gives an overview of the individual studies.

Keywords: Anti-Semitism, Europe.

Anti-Semitism is an urgent social problem in Europe. With anti-Semitic remarks and acts present even 60 years after the Holocaust and the end of National Socialist rule, it is clear that anti-Semitism has lost none of its actuality. But what exactly is to be understood by anti-Semitism and how it is to be defined still presents problems. At the same time, hostility towards Jews has a long tradition in Europe, going right back to the very beginnings of European history. This hostility changed however with the social upheavals which gripped Europe in the 19th century. Religiously motivated, the old animosity took on a new form. The nature of the relationship between traditional hostility towards Jews and an anti-Semitism which arose in the last three decades of the 19th century is a contentious issue.

¹ Under the direction of Werner Bergmann and Ulrich Wyrwa, the research project at the Technical University of Berlin's Center for Anti-Semitism Research is financed by the Volkswagen, Gerda Henkel and Thyssen Foundations as well as the Cusanus-Werk and the Foundation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah. It is conducted in collaboration with cooperation partners from a variety of European countries. The present text is a reworking of a presentation published in the *Jahrbuch für Antisemitismusforschung* 16 (2007) (translated by Paul Bowman).

Line of Inquiry

The actuality of an anti-Semitism crystallizing in the 19th century and its spread across Europe are the starting points for a research seminar at the Center for Anti-Semitism Research in Berlin. Shortly nearing completion, the seminar has explored the question whether and to what extent anti-Semitism was a European phenomenon from when the term itself was first coined and circulated through to the First World War, i.e. the formative phase of anti-Semitism as a social and political movement. The main concern guiding this research undertaking is to explore a complex of questions: What role did specific national contexts play in the manifestations of anti-Semitism? What kinds of different forms did hostility towards Jews assume in various countries? To what extent did anti-Semitic activists engage in a transnational exchange and develop European networks? And finally, what consequences did the anti-Semitic movements have for the historical development in the individual countries?

The seminar's line of questioning is focused on both the respective national characteristics of anti-Semitism in the selected countries as well as the culture transfer between the various regions across the continent, and ultimately on common European characteristics of the new hostility towards Jews. In terms of historical period, the seminar concentrates on the phase between the late 1870s, as the term anti-Semitism first surfaced, through to the outbreak of the First World War. The beginning and end of the period framing the project are thus dates of European significance: as an analysis of key encyclopedia entries has shown, the term anti-Semitism was adopted in all European languages immediately after being coined; in turn, the First World War meant a far-reaching caesura for all European societies and indeed has to be seen for Europe collectively as the "great seminal catastrophe" (George F. Kennan) of the 20th century. The First World War triggered a radicalization of the hostility towards Jews and as such marks a new phase in the history of anti-Semitism.

With its European line of questioning, the research seminar takes up the legacy of the anthology edited by Herbert A. Strauss, *Hostages of Modernization. Studies on Modern Anti-Semitism 1870-1933/39* (Berlin 1993), which comprises studies on Germany, Britain, France, Austria, Hungary, Poland and Russia.

To enable a comparison between the various studies, for the most part focusing on individual countries or language areas, and ensure that the overall project retains its coherency and conceptual congruity, a general concept of anti-Semitism is set out which provides a basis for structuring and delineating the material gathered in each individual study.

The Term Anti-Semitism

Hostility towards Jews has a long history in Europe. In 1879 however a new term was coined so as to give expression to a new form of animosity targeting Jews, one which could also serve as powerful political catchword. The traditional motifs of Christian hostility towards Jews definitely played a role in anti-Semitism; but they were obviously not what was novel about this term.

The decisively new feature of anti-Semitism is not necessarily that its argumentation was racist. Thinking in the category of race and the language of Social Darwinism were by no means inevitably anti-Semitic. Quite the contrary in fact: over the final three decades of the 19th century Jewish intellectuals attempt to formulate a concept of the "Jewish race" and use it positively for their own self-characterization; there were also social scientists and thinkers who thought in racial categories without being anti-Semitic.

What was above all novel about anti-Semitism was how it focused on a Jewish population which had undergone fundamental change. Jews were no longer a marginal religious group in a world regulated by religious affiliations, but rather a religious-cultural variant group in the very *center* of civil society.

Over the course of the 19th century the Jewish population had achieved a rapid social-economic rise in large parts of Europe. The majority of Jews no longer formed a predominately impoverished group on the very margins of society; now they represented a socially and economically successful segment of society. The Jews owed their social advancement not only to the symbolic capital of education, but in the first instance to their business competence in trade, the very section of the economy that was of less significance in the pre-industrial world and into which Jews were forced into, not least due to the negative stigmatization attached to trade. In the historical moment when through industrialization and urbanization trade became a key sector of the economy, the marginalization of the Jews turned dialectically into an advantageous position in the burgeoning consumer society. Anti-Semitism targeted not least this economic success and social advancement of the Jewish population in a period that other segments of society felt to be one of upheaval; at the same time, Jews were blamed for all the social turmoil and uncertainties pervading everyday life coupled with industrialization.

This new form of hostility manifested itself primarily on six levels during this nascent phase:

Firstly, anti-Semitism is expressed in a specific language and rhetoric, a distinctive anti-Semitic semantic. After the new term was coined in the circle around Wilhelm Marr and immediately spread throughout Europe, the semantics of this new anti-Jewish attitude soon crystallized into a linguistic syndrome. Anti-Semites compiled their own normative vocabulary to legitimate their aversions and animosity towards Jews and in doing so increasingly turned

to the contemporary discourse on race. On this semantic level the same symbols and signs are repeatedly employed; a system of overlapping and correlating anti-Semitic *topoi* and images was constructed.

Secondly, anti-Semitism was articulated as a political movement. On this level we are dealing with a manifest form of animosity towards Jews, evident in how persons sharing political views came together and founded their own organizations, established political networks and employed various media to gain a presence in the public sphere, agitating against Jews in newspaper articles, election campaigns, petitions, and public meetings.

Thirdly, anti-Semitism found expression as a cultural attitude or an atmosphere pervading society, as the contemporary observer Friedrich Naumann put it. On this level the articulation of an anti-Semitic mindset and attitudes were often latent and diffuse, frequently also ambivalent and contradictory, so that, depending on different situations and constellations, Jews were approached and encountered diversely, at times with outright rejection, while at others they were kept at a distance, or met with indifference. As a cultural attitude anti-Semitism was articulated primarily in specific political milieus, so that on this level we may speak of it as functioning as a “cultural code” (Shulamit Volkov), one that enabled members of specific political camps to signalize their sense of togetherness. The question as to what is to be concretely understood under the term anti-Semitism is always part of a public battle of opinions, which in turn means that we need to gauge to what extent anti-Semitic forces succeeded in determining the mood of political opinion and obtaining a position of cultural hegemony.

Fourthly, anti-Semitism needs to be examined as a social practice. At issue on this level are the concrete social relations between Jews and Christians in the working world, in civil society and the institutions of the state. The key questions here are how Christians regarded Jewish citizens in these areas of life, to what extent Jews were accepted as equal partners in economic life, or excluded because they were Jews, whether they were admitted to clubs and associations, and whether they had access to posts in the state bureaucracy. In these three areas – business, civil society and the state – we need to determine the concrete nature of social relations between Jews and Christians.

Fifthly, anti-Semitism is inconceivable without the tradition of Christian hostility towards Jews. The stance taken by the Christian churches on anti-Semitism is therefore of key significance. Primarily this level is concerned with the question as to what extent the churches, drawing on their own traditional religious hostility, influenced the language of anti-Semitism and what their part was in propagating and establishing anti-Semitic patterns of thinking. This entails examining the specific attitudes the Christian churches assumed towards Jews and Judaism in different countries, and to what extent they took part in spreading anti-Semitic rhetoric. Here the comparative perspective on a

European scale needs to identify the similarities and differences between the Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches.

Sixthly, and finally, probably the most difficult problem resided in the dimensions of the physical violence in which anti-Semitism was expressed: in acts of individual and collective violence, in spontaneous outbreaks or organized and concerted actions, in assaults targeting individual Jews, or attacks against facilities of Jewish communities. The level of physical violence in anti-Semitism ranged from thuggish behavior by Christian youths targeting Jews in everyday life to extreme acts in the context of accusations of ritual murder through to pogroms, which largely broke out in Eastern Europe, at times with the approval of the state. This form of anti-Semitism was occasionally present also in the context of violent social protests.

As far as the gender aspects of anti-Semitism are concerned, the comparison between male and female ascriptions and the relationship between men and women is essential on all six levels; gender is therefore a key category, as are the division into social classes and generation-specific experiences.

These six levels are at the same time the analytical categories common to all the studies in the research seminar. The coherency of the research seminar and the uniformity of the overall project are not only based on a shared understanding of what constitutes anti-Semitism, but moreover in a shared methodological and conceptual approach of the individual studies. Besides a series of comparative studies, the other projects are national in their orientation and concerned with a specific language and cultural region. But all projects are linked by a common question: the role played by transnational, intercultural exchange, the transfer of ideas and culture in the rise and development of anti-Semitism.

A European-integrative complete overview, extending from the rise of anti-Semitism through to the First World War, will represent the culmination of the seminar's work; this final study will also focus on these transnational aspects and explore intercultural exchange.

The findings will be published in the series *Studien zum Antisemitismus in Europa*, edited by Werner Bergmann and Ulrich Wyrwa in Metropol Verlag.² Initial findings have already been presented in the contributions to the conference on the reaction of European Jews to anti-Semitism, published in the 2010 yearbook of the Fritz Bauer Institute.³

² To be published shortly: MICHAL FRANKL, "Prag ist nunmehr antisemitisch. Tschechischer Antisemitismus am Ende des 19. Jahrhunderts, Studien zum Antisemitismus in Europa", vol. 1, Berlin, 2011.

³ *Einspruch und Abwehr. Die Reaktion des europäischen Judentums auf die Entstehung des Antisemitismus (1879-1914)*, *Jahrbuch 2010 zur Geschichte und Wirkung des Holocaust*, commissioned by the Fritz Bauer Institut, ed. Ulrich Wyrwa, Frankfurt/M-New York, 2010.

The Individual studies

The research seminar is made up of nine doctoral and two post-doctoral projects. The individual research projects were developed with cooperation partners from the respective countries who are involved in the preparation and realization of the studies.

In terms of geography, the seminar concentrates on the Eastern and East Central Europe region, examining both countries and provinces under the rule of the Habsburg monarchy (Galicia, the Slovakian provinces and Croatia-Slovenia) as well as the new states emerging from the Ottoman legacy, such as Greece, Romania and Bulgaria, and finally parts of the Russian Tsarist Empire (Congress Poland and Lithuania). Nevertheless, the focus of the overall project is not restricted to Eastern and East Central Europe: there is also a doctoral project comparing Denmark and Sweden, a dissertation on France and a comparative study on Germany and Italy. In the following brief reports provide a survey of the project's dimensions.⁴

1. The first project concerned with the countries and provinces of the Habsburg monarchy we will look at is the dissertation by Tim Buchen (Berlin) on the Habsburg crown land of Galicia. Buchen reconstructs anti-Semitism as reciprocal process comprising anti-Jewish agitation, conflicts between Christians and Jews and parliamentary interpellations with anti-Jewish motivation. With the rise of "mass politics" in Cisleithania in the late 1880s, new actors entered the political stage who formulated new answers to the "Jewish question". Populist parties propagated "liberation" from the economic dominance of the Jews, to be achieved by boycotting Jewish traders and setting up "locally-owned" agriculture and consumer cooperatives as well as banks for farmers. In the case of the Ukrainian populists this was always connected with the demand for "emancipation" from the politically dominant Poles. In the western region a nationalist-secular farmers' part vied with a Christian-socialist movement for the votes of the Roman Catholic lower class. In the run-up to the 1897 elections to the Imperial Assembly the clerical group employed massive anti-Semitic agitation in an effort to outdo the Social Democrats. Out of this context disturbances arose amongst the rural population, initially suppressed by the police, which then in the early summer of 1898 grew into a wave of violence obeying its own dynamic, described by the authorities as "anti-Semitic excesses". Overall several thousand Christians in over 400 municipalities attacked Jewish shops, taverns and residences. More than twenty perpetrators of the violence were shot by public security forces. Populist politicians in the Imperial Assembly in Vienna portrayed the excesses as an act of self-defense by a farming community plagued by Jewish "extortionists" and "exploiters". They

⁴ I would like to thank the contributors for their succinct summaries of the individual projects.

positively recast these acts of violence to the disadvantage of the Jewish population by turning rumors about Jewish businessmen into questions for the minister at assembly sessions, some of which ended up having legal consequences. In contrast, the anti-Semitic discourse was not followed by acts of violence if no individual advantage was to be gained, but rather involved struggle and restrictions, a phenomenon illustrated by a boycott campaign from 1903. Following the turn of the century, the politics of the crown land was dominated by the Ukrainian-Polish and the German-Polish antagonism, a situation leading to a distinct decline in anti-Semitic agitation and politics.

2. In his postdoctoral project Dr. Miroslav Szabó (Berlin) analyzes anti-Semitism in the context of the Slovakian nationalist movement in Upper Hungary, a region where a variety of cultures and nationalisms overlapped. Although before 1914 no Slovakian anti-Semitic party had formed here, in the 1880s the Hungarian anti-Semitic party was able to recruit supporters from amongst the Slovak-speaking population. In the 1890s the Catholic People's Party spread anti-Semitic propaganda in Upper Hungary, including claims of ritual murder. The hostile rhetoric of Slovakian nationalists was first directed against Jewish innkeepers and "usurers". At the same time, the negatively connoted idea of a "Jewish-Magyar symbiosis" entered the nascent Slovakian political culture.

The spread of an anti-Semitic semantic within the still largely undifferentiated Slovakian nationalist movement is examined in the context of Hungarian political anti-Semitism in the 1880s. In terms of the 1890s, the role Catholic anti-Semitic propaganda played in activating the Slovakian nationalist movement is considered. Starting from the political differentiation in the Slovakian nationalist movement that began at the turn of the century, the focus is then shifted from anti-Semitic semantic and propaganda to practices of anti-Semitic exclusion – in particular economic boycotts – initiated by a younger generation of Slovakian nationalists. To conclude, the importance of anti-Semitism for the transnationalization of Slovakian nationalism is analyzed, which in the first decade of the 20th century went hand in hand with the populist and praxological paradigm change – from "words" to "actions".

3. Jointly supervised by Holm Sundhaussen from the Free University of Berlin, Marija Vulesica (Berlin) is analyzing the crown lands of Croatia-Slovenia in her dissertation project, focusing on the party political anti-Semitism from the 1880s through to 1906.

Already in the early 1880s the opposition parties expressed in their party organs their view that Jews were agents of liberalism and German culture who were threatening Croatian national independence. They considered the "Jewish press" to be propagators of unfaith, undermining Christianity. Since 1883 Jews stood for everything the Croatian opposition vehemently rejected, namely the German and Hungarian dominance in Croatia. Rhetorical attacks against Jews became an instrument of political protest that was basically directed against the

prevailing political and economic order, but had little impact. In contrast, anti-Semitic violence was decisively rejected, even though it flamed up locally in Croatia-Slovenia in 1883 and 1903. The foundation of the anti-Semitic movement in Europe, namely the assumption that Jews were responsible for the injustices and wrongs of modern society and so the cause for the political and economic disadvantages plaguing the movement's adherents, was received favorably in Croatia-Slovenia.

Political anti-Semitism in Croatia-Slovenia reached its peak in the election campaign of 1897. A section of the opposition focused on the issue of religion and intentionally fuelled fears that Catholicism was to be ousted. Jews were identified as being behind all the dangers purportedly threatening Christians and Croats. The opposition achieved a remarkable success. After 1903 however, political anti-Semitism lost its appeal to mobilize supporters within the party spectrum examined here.

4. One of the projects dealing with the new states emerging out of the Ottoman influence is the dissertation by Maria Margaroni (Volos, Liège), supervised together with Hagen Fleischer from the University of Athens. Margaroni concentrates on the ritual murder accusations on the island of Corfu in 1891, exploring the role played by rumors and the specific perceptions and constructs of Jews in Greece at the end of the 19th century. Up until 1912, as Thessalonica was annexed and a city with a Jewish population of over 50% became a part of Greece, comparatively relatively few Jews lived in the country. Besides phases of peaceful coexistence between the Christian-Orthodox and the Jewish population, the last decades of the 19th century witnessed the emergence of an anti-Semitic atmosphere in Greece. The peak of anti-Semitic agitation in Greece was reached on Corfu in 1891 with the accusations of ritual murder, which triggered rioting and the plundering of the Jewish quarter before culminating in the dispersal of the Jewish community. Decisive in leading to such a pogrom on this small and unremarkable island were both general factors influencing Greek history and culture in these years as well as factors specific to the island. Most notable amongst these general factors is the presence of Christian and traditional prejudices towards Jews in Greek folk culture, which were supported by the lower and upper clergy of the Orthodox Church. The specific reasons were rooted in the concrete situation of the Corfu population at this time. One of these was the social rise of the Jews following the incorporation of the Ionian island into Greece (1864), a rise that the Christian-Orthodox population perceived as a threat and danger. In the context of social conflicts moreover, Christian tenants were placed at disadvantage vis-à-vis Jewish creditors, while one of Greece's most influential anti-Semitic politicians, Iakovos Polyas, fanned the flames of agitation on the island. The tense situation was intensified by the state organs responding contradictorily to the accusations of ritual murder. Whereas the police launched actions against the

Jewish population, adding fuel to the fire, state prosecutors and the military appealed to reason and protected the Jewish quarter. Similarly, the conservative and liberal parties exploited the incident politically in the communal elections of July 1891 in contrary ways. Additional confusion was created by contradictory reports in both the local and the Athenian press, and the dynamic unleashed by rumors amongst the island's residents led to further escalation. These factors all came together so that in 1891 anti-Semitic disturbances of such ferocity broke out that they attracted attention across Europe.

5. For contemporary observers Romania was one of the countries in Europe where the situation of Jews was most problematic. Iulia Onac (Bucharest), jointly supervised by Viorel Achim from the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences in Bucharest, has examined the development of anti-Semitism in Romania from 1878 to 1914 and shown that the issue of the legal position of Jews triggered conflicts in 1861/2, soon after the United Principalities of Romania were founded. Further anti-Jewish riots at the beginning of the 1870s created such a furor in Europe that the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* campaigned for the situation of Jews in Romania to be put on the agenda of the Congress of Berlin in 1878. Although the Romanian government had officially consented to grant the Jewish population legal equality, it refrained from acting on this commitment. Between 1878 and 1914 more than 200 laws, ordinances and circulars directed against the Jews were passed.

Besides these legal restrictions, Jews in Romania were confronted with a strong anti-Semitic political movement. In 1887 an Anti-Israelite Congress (*Congresul Anti-Israelit*) was held during which the anti-Semitic organization *Alianța Anti-Israelită* was founded, to be followed in 1895 by the *Anti-Semitic Alliance* (*Alianța Antisemită*). Both of these organizations were made up of extremely active and influential agitators, generating a broad resonance in the population and attracting intense public attention (throughout Europe).

The situation in Romania was characterized by another feature – that not only these organizations came to prominence through their anti-Semitism, but that the mindset of practically the entire political class in Romania was anti-Semitic and, moreover, a large number of intellectuals were actively involved in anti-Jewish agitation. The social significance of the anti-Semitism put on display by Romanian intellectuals was evident in anti-Jewish disturbances. In the cities it was above all professors who came to the fore, while in rural areas the clergy and teachers were often amongst the protagonists of anti-Jewish excesses, for instance the peasant disturbances of 1907 which, although a large number of peasants themselves were killed, had a distinctively anti-Semitic character.

The ongoing poor situation of Romanian Jews meant that this issue remained a focus of the European and European-Jewish public.

6. Responsible for studying Bulgaria, another state emerging from the influence of the Ottoman Empire, is Veselina Kulenska (Sofia), with the rector

of the University of Sofia, Ivan Ilchev, the cooperation partner. For research into anti-Semitism Bulgaria is illuminating primarily because it is an Orthodox country at the intersection to the Islamic world, and moreover that it is one of the few countries in Europe where anti-Semitism was less developed. Bulgaria had a Jewish population comprised of long-established Sephardic and, more recently arrived, Ashkenazi Jews. Following a revolt in April 1876 and the Russo-Turkish War, the state of Bulgaria was newly founded after centuries of Ottoman rule, its borders recognized internationally at the Congress of Berlin in 1878. In accordance with the principle of civilian and political equality of all citizens anchored in the Berlin Treaty, the emancipation of the Jews was adopted in the Bulgarian constitution of 1879. At the same time however, the Jews of Bulgaria were not spared the anti-Semitic ideas and trend spreading throughout Europe in these years. Accusations of ritual murder were raised in the cities of Vraca (1891) and Jambol (1898), with anti-Semitic excesses following in both cases. In April 1901 a pogrom was unleashed in the west Bulgarian city of Kjustendil, whereby its Jewish quarter was plundered and the synagogue burnt to the ground. Besides ritual murder accusations, in the 1890s economically-motivated anti-Semitism became increasingly important. Bulgarian traders demanded that the authorities move the market day from the traditional Friday to Saturday, thus attempting to exclude the Jews from the markets. Individual agitators and propagandists like Trajko Bozhidarov, Nikola Mitakov and Stojan Schangov played an instrumental role in the spread of anti-Semitic stereotypes and accusations amongst the Bulgarian population. Most prominent was Nikola Mitakov, who was editor of a series of anti-Semitic journals in 1893-1894, *Bulgaria bez ewrei* (Bulgaria without Jews), *Bulgaria zu bulgarite* (Bulgaria the Bulgarians) and *Narodna Svoboda* (National Freedom). Despite the efforts of these organs and other anti-Semitic newspapers, pamphlets and leaflets, as well as the aforementioned anti-Jewish violence, anti-Semitic ideas failed to find any significant resonance in Bulgarian society at the end of the 19th century.

7. Maciej Moszyński is examining Congress Poland, part of the Tsarist Empire, in a dissertation project co-supervised by Krzysztof Makowski from the University of Posen. Here Moszyński is concerned with tracing the rise and development of anti-Semitic thinking and action in the various social classes of Congress Poland in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. Taking a systematic approach, he is analyzing the attitudes observable to Jews, to the “Jewish question” and the “anti-Semite question” in the four dominant political groupings in Congress Poland. Although the Polish Liberals advocated the assimilation of Jews, the Liberal rhetoric, from the outset controversial, became increasingly radical over the years. An example of this shift is the political development of Andrzej Niemojewski, which is characterised by a sharp “anti-Semitic” turn.

In its attitude to Jews and anti-Semitism the second group, the Conservatives and the political Right, was decisively influenced by Jan Jeleński, the founder of the weekly paper *Rola*, where he was editor-in-chief for over 30 years and he turned into the most prominent mouthpiece of anti-Semitism in Congress Poland. An informal political circle formed around *Rola*, known as the “*Rola* movement”, which saw it as its mission to carry anti-Semitism into mainstream society.

The third political force was the National Democrats. In the 1880s an anti-liberal camp, a self-proclaimed champion of the “people”, had formed around the paper *Głos*, which in the 1890s then became politically active in the underground and out of which the National Democrat Party emerged. As a nationalist movement this party strove to install an ethnically homogenous state, and so opposed the integration of Jews in Polish society and called for a boycott of Jewish businesses. The key protagonists of their anti-Semitic agitation included Roman Dmowski and Zygmunt Balicki. The fourth political camp in Congress Poland was political Catholicism, which was grouped around the various Catholic journals and propagated the doctrine of “Asemitism” first formulated by the priest Marian Morawski. The opinion-forming Catholic press, characterized to various degrees by an anti-Jewish ideology, included *Przegląd Katolicki*, the semi-official organ of the Warsaw curia, and the papers *Polak Katolik* and *Posiew* founded by the priest Ignacy Kłopotowski.

8. Klaus Richter (Berlin) is examining Lithuania, part of the Russian Empire since the partition of Poland, under the co-supervision of Darius Staliūnas from the Lithuanian Institute for Historical Studies in Vilnius. Within Tsarist Russia Lithuania was a pale settlement, outside of which Jews were not permitted to settle. Due to the diametrically opposed social structure – while Lithuanians lived almost exclusively as farmers in the countryside, the majority of Jews resided in small towns – Jews and Lithuanians encountered one another almost exclusively in the economic sphere. For this reason, Lithuanian-Jewish conflicts and Lithuanian anti-Semitism can only be understood when the marketplace of the Lithuanian shtetl is looked at closely, where Lithuanian farmers and Jewish merchants met to trade with grain and flax. This is where incidents of anti-Jewish, collective violence originated, as trading cooperatives attempted to establish a hold in the market right next to their Jewish competitors, aiming to “economically emancipate” Lithuanian farmers from Jewish traders.

In 1900 a wave of anti-Jewish violence perpetrated by Lithuanian farmers broke out across northern Lithuania. Following an abating of the violence, new conflicts broke out once again in Lithuania in the wake of the Kišinev pogrom and the wave of pogroms sweeping through the Russian Empire, reaching their peak in the Revolution of 1905/06 and leading to Jewish communities and Jewish revolutionary groups resorting increasingly to self-protection measures.

In many respects the Revolution marked a caesura. Lithuanian newspapers were permitted, a reform of the laws of association favored the rise of a cooperative movement, which viewed itself as firmly Lithuanian and Christian and targeted – at least under clerical leadership – Jewish traders. In this context a debate arose on the “Jewish question” in an increasingly diversified political spectrum which first came to a provisional end with the outbreak of the First World War.

9. The focus of the whole project is not limited solely to Eastern and Eastern Central Europe however. In cooperation with Christhard Hoffmann from the University of Bergen and the Holocaust Centre in Oslo, Christoph Leiska (Berlin/Nuremberg) is undertaking a dissertation project comparing the situation in Denmark and Sweden. In Sweden conservative political milieus drew on arguments put forward by German anti-Semites in the context of protectionism debates in the 1880s. The oppositional construct between “patriotic nationals” and “Jewish cosmopolites” became a key element in the pamphlet literature of the so-called customs row (*tullstrid*) and impeded the participation of Jewish Swedes in politics. In this context attempts were also launched to found anti-Semitic associations and newspapers; they never really succeeded however in decisively influencing the political agenda. In contrast, Denmark’s difficult relationship to Prussia and the German Reich proved to be a hindrance for the transfer of anti-Semitic ideas. Unlike the protectionist circles in Sweden, interpreting the history of the term “anti-Semitism” as a German phenomenon meant that it was awkward for Danish nationalist circles to employ. At the same time though, Denmark had its first post-emancipation controversy on the position of Jews in society and politics before the formation of German anti-Semitism in the 1870s, namely in the public debates involving the brothers Edvard and Georg Brandes. This controversy also revolved around a fundamental dispute as to the relationship between the “Jewish” and the “Danish” and competing models of society and the nation.

The waves of immigration at the beginning of the 20th century changed the perception of what was “Jewish” in Sweden and Denmark. For sections of the traditional middle-class, immigration from Eastern Europe meant the arrival of actual or perceived new competition, whether peddling as in Sweden or the tailor’s trade in Denmark. The agitation of Swedish retailer associations targeting Jewish immigration shifted in the period under study from a struggle against “illegitimate competition” to an at times openly racist anti-Semitism arguing on the basis of a worldview. Similarly for Denmark the example of the tailors demonstrates the distrust that existed when dealing with Jewish competitors. At the same time, a more complex picture emerges out of the interaction between master tailors, tailors organized into trade unions and Jewish migrants who were hardly organized at all.

10. In France – the working area of Damien Guillaume (Paris) whose dissertation is being co-supervised with Christophe Prochasson from the École

des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales – Jews were considered to be clandestine German sympathizers after the defeat of 1871, a suspicion particularly rife amongst the royalist milieu. At the beginning of the 1880s the wave of anti-Semitism also reached France. Politically the anti-Semitic rhetoric was employed primarily by anti-republican and clerical circles, who perceived anti-Semitism as an ideal means to agitate against the Republic. The anti-Semitic journal *L'Anti-Juif* was already being published in Paris in 1881, followed shortly after by *L'Anti-Sémitique*, whose motto was: “Le juif – voilà l’ennemi”, “The Jew – here is our enemy”. After the author Édouard Drumont published his book *La France Juive* in 1886, quickly going through several editions, he founded the party *Ligue Nationale Antisémitique de France*, which initially however failed to attract the expected large clientele. In response, Drumont founded the journal *La Libre Parole*, which he cleverly and efficiently used for his anti-Semitic campaigns, so that by the end of the 1890s the Anti-Semitic League had eleven thousand members.

The Dreyfus Affair then triggered a large and heated public debate on anti-Semitism, one that attracted attention across Europe. The Dreyfus Affair did not mark the end of the anti-Semitic movement in France however; the anti-Semitic journalist and writer Charles Maurras founded the political organization *Action française* as the affair unfolded, and in the journal of the same name it had a platform for spreading its hostile anti-Jewish propaganda.

II. Thematically the seminar takes up the research study on Italy that Ulrich Wyrwa completed as a post-doctoral project at the Center for Anti-Semitism Research. Comparing Italy and Germany, Wyrwa shows that Italy is one of the few countries in Europe where an anti-Semitic movement was unable to take hold and develop, so that no genuinely influential anti-Semitic mood had spread and pervaded society. Nonetheless, Italy was by no means free of anti-Semitism. This is above all evident in the Catholic Church, which however due to its stance of refusing to become involved with the nation and politics, did not exert any decisive influence on public opinion and political culture in liberal Italy. A conservative-monarchist milieu analogous to the German political spectrum, which developed its political worldview out of a liaison between the throne and the altar and in which anti-Semitism assumed a key role, could not develop in Italy. The weak presence of anti-Semitism in Italian society is to be explained less by – to mention some of the arguments put forward in the literature – the contemporaneous national integration of Jews and non-Jews in the process of the formation of the Italian nation state, the high degree of assimilation amongst Italian Jews or the low numbers of Jews, or for that matter the economic backwardness of Italy or the moderate immigration of Eastern European Jews; genuinely decisive is that the Church was not a factor in Italy’s political culture, and so its anti-Semitic agitation generated little or no resonance. The milieu supporting the interests of the state and the dominating bourgeoisie class were

liberal in their outlook in Italy, and even the socially and political groups opposed to the state were anticlerical, so that anti-Semitic thinking failed to have any impact on public opinion.

Objectives and Intentions

The objectives and intentions of the research seminar embrace five levels:

The first concern is to contribute to determining the actuality of anti-Semitism in Europe. Whether there is such a phenomenon as a 'new' anti-Semitism, and if yes than wherein does this newness reside, can only be answered on the basis of knowledge of the past. For this reason, the seminar explores and traces the formative phase of anti-Semitism as a new social and political movement and the rise of an anti-Semitic vocabulary in the 19th century in a European perspective.

Secondly, the seminar wishes to correct the shortcomings of anti-Semitism research. The focus here is on:

- a) The question as to wherein lay the specifics of German anti-Semitism that culminated in National Socialism. To identify what was unique about German anti-Semitism requires a systematic, comparative analysis of anti-Semitism in other European countries.
- b) Beyond this dimension, another shortcoming of current research into anti-Semitism is that far too much emphasis is placed on anti-Semitism in Germany in terms of its antecedent role to National Socialism. So as to avoid teleological blind spots, comparative views are necessary which place the history of anti-Semitism into a European context.
- c) Finally, a dispute is currently raging in anti-Semitism research as to whether anti-Semitism represents a concomitant phenomenon to the social and cultural upheavals of the final three decades of the 19th century that obeys an inner necessity and arises from a specific logic of social development – or if not specific constellations were the foundations for anti-Semitic thinking and action. This question can only be answered by taking a comparative perspective.

The third objective, the seminar's intention in terms of academic policy as it were, resides in contributing to cooperation between historians in Europe, whereby above all the particular forms of historical memory in Eastern Europe are to be compared with the Western European approaches to remembering the past. The seminar seeks to promote and support the integration of young scholars from Eastern Europe into the European "scientific community", helping Europe to become a genuine communicative sphere.

Fourthly, the research seminar is interested in providing an account of the anti-Semitic past in the various countries of the European Union. The concern here is to uncover the historical roots of contemporary anti-Semitism in Europe.

The seminar sees itself as contributing to the historical-political debate on the causes of European anti-Semitism.

Fifthly, the research seminar is conceived as a European project that is not only made up of a number of unrelated national studies, but is comparative and so European in its very substance. The individual studies thus explore transnational issues and the intercultural dimension in how anti-Semitism emerged and took shape; with this approach the seminar is looking to answer the question whether we need to speak of a European anti-Semitism or of anti-Semitism in Europe.

The guiding interest of the seminar's research is thus focused on the importance anti-Semitism needs to be assigned in European history and the historical self-understanding of a Europe undergoing a process of unification. A history of Europe must also broach the dark sides and abysses of the European past. This includes of course the history of anti-Semitism in Europe. If the Holocaust is to be posited as the "negative founding event" of a unified Europe, then the historical roots of anti-Semitism need to be explored in a European-wide context.

Europe can only be thought about by taking its diversity and differences into account. It is above all for this reason that a history of Europe that seeks to view the unity of the continent must furnish a historical account of those forces which opposed the recognition of other groups or ways of life deviating from their 'norms'. It is therefore necessary to examine the factors facilitating the rise of and the subsequent historical development of anti-Semitism in Europe in a systematic, comparative perspective.